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INFO IGAD COLLECTIVE
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RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEPADJ/CJTF-HOA J2X CAMP LEMONIER DJ

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DJIBOUTI 000555

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [MASS](#) [PTER](#) [DJ](#) [SO](#)

SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI FONMIN ON SUPPORT TO SOMALI GOVERNMENT

REF: 25 MAY 2009 - SWAN/PATTERSON TELCON; DJIBOUTI 435

CLASSIFIED BY: James Swan, Ambassador; REASON: 1.4(A), (B), (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: In a series of telephone conversations May 23-25, Foreign Minister Mahmoud Yousseuf told Ambassador that the GODJ remains "very worried" over developments in Somalia. Somali President Sharif has been in daily contact with Djiboutian President Guelleh to request assistance. Yousseuf confirmed that the GODJ had sent two shipments of military supplies to the TFG, and said President Sharif has requested that Djibouti proceed with training a group of approximately 200 Somali forces. While noting the USG financial assistance already provided to the TFG and USG commitments to backfill an emergency shipment of military aid from Uganda, Yousseuf urged the USG to do more, including provide additional financial support to the TFG and assist with transport of TFG forces for training in Djibouti. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Sharif Asks Guelleh for Help: Djiboutian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Yousseuf called Ambassador evening May 23 to underscore that GODJ is "very worried" over developments in Somalia. Drawing from Somalia Unit reporting, Ambassador noted that TFG forces appeared to have gained back ground in Mogadishu after several days of fighting, and that the actual zones of control in the capital had changed little over the past several weeks. Yousseuf said GODJ is less concerned about day-to-day swings in the military balance and more worried about the concerted campaign against the TFG that threatens to make it impossible to govern. He said that Somali President Sharif had called Djiboutian President Guelleh that day, and on each of the two preceding days, to request additional military support.

¶3. (C) GODJ Sends Military Supplies: Djibouti had provided military assistance in response to Sharif's request, Yousseuf said on May 23, but "not much" (pas grande chose). Echoing what Djiboutian Chief of Defense Forces Fathi Ahmed Houssein told Ambassador and DCM on May 20, Yousseuf said the GODJ's small stock of arms and ammunition must be husbanded in case of another incursion from Eritrea. In a subsequent conversation on May 25, however, Yousseuf said that the GODJ had dispatched a second small shipment of military assistance to the TFG either earlier that day or the day before. He made no request for the USG to defray the cost of this Djiboutian military aid to the TFG.

¶4. (SBU) GODJ Urges More USG Support to TFG: Yousseuf urged additional USG financial assistance to the TFG. He was already aware of the \$500,000 provided the week of May 11, but said TFG had further unmet financial requirements. After consulting with Nairobi's Somalia Unit (Ref A), Ambassador also briefed Yousseuf on

the USG commitment to backfill a Ugandan shipment of at least 19 tons of military equipment and supplies that would be sent to Mogadishu on May 26. Ambassador also noted that the Somalia Unit had received no further request from the TFG for additional financial support. Youssouf said he believes financial aid remains an urgent requirement, although the Arab League had provided \$1 million and Yemen \$1.5 million in response to appeals from Sharif.

15. (SBU) GODJ to Train TFG Forces: Youssouf said President Sharif had confirmed his desire to send approximately 200 of his forces to Djibouti, possibly as early as May 29, to receive training from the GODJ. Youssouf requested USG assistance with transport of the trainees. Ambassador responded that a general request for assistance with transport and other aspects of the training had been conveyed to Washington (Ref B), but we would need more details concerning the requirement (including the number to be moved, from which locations, on what dates/times, etc.) in order to provide a definitive response. Youssouf subsequently reported on May 25 that President Sharif had been so informed and would direct Prime Minister Omar Ali Shermarke to make a formal request to the Embassy Nairobi Somalia Unit for transport assistance and for additional financial support to the TFG.

16. (C) Comment: Djibouti's leaders are worried about Somalia on several levels: they see persistent and perhaps growing

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insecurity in an already fragile Somalia; they see severe threats to the TFG, in which they invested heavily through the "Djibouti process;" and they fear expanding terrorist threats (including from foreign fighters) in both Yemen and Somalia. With its modest means, Djibouti has made a small yet timely contribution of military aid to Sharif's forces, and is seeking to use its diplomatic influence to secure support for the TFG from others (including us). Djibouti will be watching the USG response closely to gauge our commitment to the TFG, our focus on Somalia, and our understanding that this is a critical national security issue for Djibouti.

SWAN